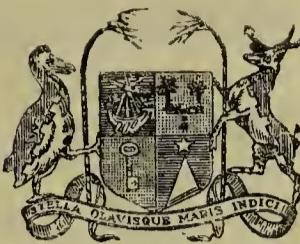


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**COLONY OF MAURITIUS**

**Annual Report  
on the  
Medical and Health Department**



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# Annual Report on the Medical and Health Department, 1941

## I.—ADMINISTRATION

The Director, Dr. J. B. Kirk, C.M.G., was promoted to the Gold Coast and left the Colony on the 16th September, 1941.

Dr. A. C. d'Arifat and Dr. L. M. J. R. Pilot were appointed Acting Director and Acting Deputy Director respectively.

In addition to his new duties Dr. Pilot continues to perform those of his substantive post.

On the 17th February, 1941, Dr. R. Lavoipierre, Health Officer, Plaines Wilhems, was seconded for duty as Medical Officer, Detainment Camp, and replaced by Dr. P. Goupille of the Hookworm-Malaria Branch.

One Dresser of the Department was also seconded for duty at the Detainment Camp hospital.

During 1941, seven male and five female hospital students qualified as dressers and nurses.

Six male and one female hospital students were enlisted for training.

Four sanitary cadets were also enlisted for training.

## Legal

2. The following legislation was passed during 1941—

*Ordinance No. 44 of 1941*—Further to amend the Medical Practitioners Ordinance, 1927.

*Government Notice No. 8 of 1941*—Regulations made by the Director, Medical and Health Department, under paragraphs 5 and 15 of Section V of Article 193 of the Public Health Ordinance, 1925, amending the Regulations published under Government Notification No. 498 of 15th September, 1940.

*Government Notice No. 9 of 1941*—Regulations made by the Director, Medical and Health Department under paragraphs 5 and 15 of Section V of Article 193 of the Public Health Ordinance, 1925, amending the Regulations published under Government Notification No. 73 of 1st May, 1908.

## Financial

3. The revenue of the Colony for the financial year 1940-41 was Rs. 22,238,456.89 of which Rs. 118,737.10 was earned by the Medical and Health Department.

The expenditure on Medical and Sanitary Services including Municipal expenditure under this Department, control was Rs. 1,593,066.69.

## II.—PUBLIC HEALTH

4. The state of the public health during 1941 was fair. There were no major epidemics.

5. The number of patients treated in the hospitals was 32,946 as compared with 28,559 for the previous year, and the number of attendances at dispensaries and out-patient departments of the hospitals was 342,576. In 1940 the comparable number was 370,588.

The birth rate for 1941 was 33·0 per 1,000; that for 1940, 29·8 per 1,000, and the death rate 25·6 per 1,000 as compared with 25·5 per 1,000 for 1940.

6. The number of cases of malignant disease admitted to the public hospitals was 220. The distribution of these malignant tumours was as follows—

Female genital organs and breast ...	...	(118)	136
Peritoneum and intestinal tract ...	...	( 8)	12
Stomach and liver ...	...	( 21)	26
Buccal cavity ...	...	( 16)	17
Skin ...	...	( 21)	20
Site not specified ...	...	( 47)	9
Non-malignant new growths ...	...	(163)	167

NOTE—The numbers in parentheses are the figures for 1940 included for comparison.

The total number of deaths in the Colony from cancer and other tumours is reported by the Registrar General to be 66 (75).

### Communicable Diseases

#### INSECT BORNE DISEASES

7. *Malaria*.—The total number of patients suffering from malaria admitted to the hospitals was 4,458, an increase of 1,130 over the figure for the previous year. The case mortality was 2·01 per cent.

The following tabular statement shows the admissions for malaria and deaths ascribed to it during the year—

Institutions	Admissions	Deaths
Civil Hospital ...	668	25
Port Louis Prison ...	181	2
Long Mountain Hospital ...	396	5
Poudre d'Or Hospital ...	284	—
Flacq Hospital ...	378	2
Mahebourg Hospital ...	446	16
Souillac Hospital ...	484	5
Victoria Hospital ...	559	18
Moka Hospital ...	114	3
Grand River North-West Hospital ...	301	1
Mental Hospital Infirmary ...	26	—
Barkly Industrial School Hospital ...	55	1
Detainment Camp Hospital ...	566	12
Totals ...	<u>4,458</u>	<u>90</u>

The total number of deaths in the Colony from malaria and malarial cachexia, 2,525, is equivalent to a death rate of 6·20 per 1,000 living. The rate for 1940 was 5·35 per 1,000.

The usual anti-larval measures were continued throughout the year.

8. *Filariasis*.—25 and 81 cases of Filariasis were treated in hospitals and dispensaries respectively in 1941.

### Miscellaneous Communicable Diseases

9. *Plague.*—No case of plague occurred during the year.

10. *Smallpox.*—There has been no indigenous smallpox since 1913. 9,420 children were vaccinated during 1941 by the public vaccinators. The statistics are as follows—

Successful vaccinations on first attendance	...	...	8,325
Successful vaccinations on second and subsequent attendances	...	784	
			— 9,109
Unsuccessful vaccinations	...	...	278
Vaccinations in which results could not be obtained	...	33	
			— 9,420
	TOTAL	...	

The proportion of children vaccinated by Government Vaccinators to live births is 70·1 per cent.

With reference to this it should be borne in mind that an appreciable number of infants are vaccinated by private practitioners and are not included in the above mentioned figures.

11. *Enteric Fever.*—There were 408 cases of Enteric Fever notified in the Colony during 1941. March and April were the months of highest incidence. The monthly incidence is shown in the following table—

January	...	...	24	July	...	...	24
February	...	...	33	August	...	...	38
March	...	...	78	September	...	...	37
April	...	...	40	October	...	...	30
May	...	...	32	November	...	...	17
June	...	...	32	December	...	...	23
				Total :	408		

12. *Diphtheria.*—348 cases of diphtheria were notified in 1941. The disease occurs sporadically ; no epidemic outbreaks have been recorded for years. It is generally mild.

### Diseases and Accidents associated with the Puerperal State

13. Though a number of non-communicable conditions are included in these statistics it is convenient to group them under one head since their significance lies in revealing certain causes of maternal and infantile mortality. 138 deaths were registered as being due to the puerperal state. They are classified as under—

Abortion	...	...	8	Puerperal sepsis	...	18
Ectopic gestation	...	1		Other accidents of pregnancy	25	
Puerperal albuminuria and convulsions	...	6		Other toxæmias of pregnancy	6	
Puerperal haemorrhage	...	8		Other accidents of childbirth	66	
				Total :	138	

Fourteen cases of puerperal septicaemia of which 10 proved fatal were treated in hospitals, a case mortality of 71·4 per cent.

The maternal mortality rate (the ratio of the number of deaths ascribed to the puerperal state to the total number of births including still-births) was 9·50 per 1,000 in 1941 as compared with a rate of 9·24 per 1,000 for the previous year.

14. *Erysipelas*.—56 cases were notified, compared with 45 in 1940. 11 deaths were registered.

15. *Tuberculosis*.—Out of the 10,436 deaths of 1941, 221 were due to tuberculosis. These figures shew a death rate from tuberculosis of 542·6 per million living.

16. *Leprosy*.—The disease is well under control and appears to be in regression.

The Leprosy Board met on three occasions during the year and two patients were recommended for admission to the Leper Hospital.

17. *Venereal Diseases*.—501 cases of admission for syphilis and 10 deaths from this disease were recorded from the hospitals during the year. 181 cases of gonorrhœa were treated, and 133 cases of soft chancre.

### **Helminthic Diseases**

18. *Ankylostomiasis*.—16,782 cases were treated in hospitals and dispensaries and the number of deaths in hospitals ascribed to that disease was 48.

The Hookworm Branch continued its activities during the year but these were on a reduced scale in the districts owing to the secondment of Dr. Gouille for duty as Health Officer, Plaines Wilhems.

The following is a summary of the work done by the Branch—

		1st      2nd      3rd      4th      Total					
Number of treatments given at the Hookworm Dispensary, Curepipe ...					14,700		
Number of treatments given in villages and on estates ...	...	...	41,489	7,871	441	—	49,801

19. *Schistosomiasis*.—43 cases were treated in the hospitals during the year and 303 at the dispensaries.

### **Deficiency Diseases**

20. The following deficiency diseases were recorded during the year.

Total Cases of Deficiency Diseases Treated in Hospitals—

Beri-Beri ...	...	...	21	Avitaminosis "B" ...	...	95
Rickets...	...	...	4	Avitaminosis undetermined ...	134	
Avitaminosis "A" ...	...	17		Scurvy ...	...	2

Total number of Attendances at Dispensaries for Deficiency Diseases—

Rickets ...	...	...	17	Avitaminosis "A" ...	...	54
Beri-Beri ...	...	...	81	Avitaminosis undetermined	77	
Pellagra ...	...	...	2	Scurvy...	...	1

### III.—VITAL STATISTICS

21. Actual population of Mauritius on the 30th June, 1941 : 407,259. Area in square miles is 720 ; and the density of population per square mile is 565·63.

22. *Marriages.*—4,741 marriages were celebrated in 1941, as compared with 2,424 in 1940 ; showing an increase of 2,317. This is equivalent to a marriage rate (number of persons married to every thousand of population) of 23·3 per 1,000, against 11·9 per 1,000 in 1940.

23. *Births.*—The total number of births for the year was 13,430 (males 6,778 and females 6,652). 4,636 of these occurred in the General and 8,794 in the Indian population. The birth-rate was 33·0 against 29·8 per 1,000 in 1940.

24. *Deaths.*—During the year 1941 the total number of deaths was 10,436 (males 5,243 and females 5,193) ; 3,317 in the General and 7,119 in the Indian population. The number is an increase of 63 over the total deaths of 1940.

The death-rate for the Colony was 25·6 compared with 25·5 for 1940 and with 28·06 per 1,000 for the quinquennial period preceding 1941. The month of maximum mortality was May, whilst in 1940 it was January.

25. The following table exhibits the causes of deaths and rates classified according to the "Manual of International List of Causes of Death" adopted by the Registrar General of England (based on the Fourth Decennial Commission, Paris, 1929):

<i>Group</i>	<i>No. of deaths</i>	<i>Rate per 1000</i>
1. Infectious and parasitic diseases	3,693	9·1
2. Cancer and other tumours	65	·2
3. Rheumatism, diseases of nutrition	97	·2
4. Diseases of the blood and blood-forming organs	173	·4
5. Chronic poisoning	—	—
6. Diseases of the nervous system and sense organs	395	1·0
7. Diseases of the circulatory system	209	·5
8. Diseases of the respiratory system	1,212	3·0
9. Diseases of the digestive system	1,288	3·2
10. Non-venereal diseases of the genito-urinary system and anexa	570	1·4
11. Diseases of pregnancy and childbirth	138	·3
12. Diseases of the skin and cellular tissues	60	·1
13. Diseases of bones and organs of locomotion	2	·0
14. Congenital malformations	4	·0
15. Diseases of infancy	858	2·1
16. Senility	493	1·2
17. Death from violence	161	·4
18. Ill-defined causes	1,018	2·5
	10,436	

### Infantile Mortality

26. The infantile mortality rate is the number of deaths of infants under one year of age occurring in any year for every thousand live births registered during the year.

The infantile rate for 1941 was 134·8 per 1,000 as compared with 162·0 per 1,000 for 1940.

### Still-Births

27. A still-birth is defined by the Registrar General as "a child born dead at or after the seventh month of pregnancy."

The number of still-births registered during 1941 is as under—

Males	...	...	...	584
Females	...	...	...	516
			Total	1,100

It is equivalent to 8·2 per cent. of live births for the same period, as compared with 8·71 per cent. for 1940.

### Other Communicable Diseases

28. Other communicable diseases do not occur to such an extent as to make them a public health problem.

During the year under review there has been a number of sporadic cases of typhoid fever, dysenteries and also of diphtheria.

With regard to the last named disease quite a number of persons were found to harbour bacilli morphologically identical to the Klebs-Loeffler's bacillus but they proved avirulent to the guinea pig.

### General Measures of Sanitation

29. There is no change to record.

### Food and Drugs in Relation to Health and Disease

30. There are six public and four private abattoirs in the Colony. The public abattoirs administered by the Municipality of Port Louis, the Boards of Beau Bassin-Rose Hill, and Curepipe, are each controlled by a veterinary officer.

The other abattoirs are conducted under the supervision of the sanitary staff:

It may be said that on the whole the foodstuffs marketed are wholesome and of good quality. The only condition found with any frequency in the meat trade is tuberculosis. Cestode infection is practically non-existent among cattle and it is very rare in human beings.

The only exception to this general rule is milk which is seldom retailed in its natural state. In spite of the control which is exercised and the heavy penalties inflicted upon offenders sophistication is rife and appears to be ineradicable.

### Port Health Work and Administration

31. The following table summarises the work done by the Port Sanitary Authority—

				Sailing craft	Steamers
Vessels arriving	...	...	...	9	120
Crews examined	...	...	...	54	4,055
Passengers examined	...	...	...	—	1,168
Vessels given pratique on arrival	...	...	...	9	120
Vessels given pratique after disinfection of the linen and effects of the passengers, crew, fumigation and disinfection of the forecastle	...	...	...	—	—
Vessels given pratique after disinfection of linen, etc., and claytonisation of cargo	...	...	...	—	—
Vessels arriving from infected ports	...	...	...	—	43
Vessels detained for purposes of disinfection and fumigation on account of plague, cholera or smallpox	...	...	...	—	11

## Maternity and Child Welfare

32. The Society has been formed into a corporate body.

A special Clinic Day for European mothers in poor circumstances has been opened in Curepipe.

A scheme has been devised to have nurse-midwives trained in public hospitals.

Three suitable candidates were selected and have started training at Victoria Hospital.

A refresher course for midwives has also been started in the same hospital.

33. Six qualified midwives are employed by the Government. The work is summarised below—

	No. of visits made	No. of confinements conducted
Grand Port ...	1,540	219
Rivière du Rempart ...	39	30
Savanne ...	332	40
Long Mountain ...	175	39
Moka ...	113	60
	<i>2190</i>	<i>386</i>

## The Midwives Board

34. The Midwives Board met once during the year.

## Hospital

35. There has been an increase in the number of patients treated in the hospitals of the Colony : 32,946 against 28,559 for the previous year. The number of confinements conducted in hospitals was 1,117 against 1,064 for 1940.

The number of estate hospitals at the end of the year was 40.

36. The professional work of the hospitals is summarised in the table on page 8. In the rural districts the principal causes of admission to hospitals are malaria, ankylostomiasis and respiratory diseases. It will be noted that pneumonia and malaria are noteworthy causes of death in hospitals.

## Detainment Camp

On the 27th December, 1940, 1,580 Jewish detainees arrived in the Colony. They all showed signs of fatigue and debility and some were suffering from typhoid fever.

This disease soon assumed an epidemic form and at about the same time there was a sharp outbreak of malaria amongst the detainees.

Prompt and adequate measures, both medical and sanitary, were taken. The typhoid epidemic died down at the end of February and malaria was soon under control.

More ample hospital accommodation than was at first provided for being required, the Industrial School which stands in close proximity to the Detainment Camp was evacuated to the Quarantine Station at Cannoniers' Point and the buildings converted into a hospital of 200 beds.

## REPORT ON HOSPITALS FOR THE YEAR 1941

## ANNUAL REPORT ON THE

Hospitals	Patients remaining on 31.12.40	New admissions	Deaths	Patients remaining on 31.12.41	No. of beds	No. of surgical operations	Particular diseases causing the largest number of admissions	Particular diseases causing the largest number of deaths
Civil ...	... 175	8,000	49	151	301	4,187	Malaria, Ankylostomiasis, Bronchitis, Anaemia, Dyspepsia, Pneumonia, Enteritis	Tuberculosis Nephritis, Dysentery and Enteritis.
Port Louis Prison...	7	560	6	4	24	38	Malaria, Influenza, Cellulitis, Diarrhoea	Pneumonia.
Long Mountain ...	14	1,875	59	25	65	187	Malaria, Injuries, Abscesses, Ankylostomiasis, Bronchitis	
Poudre d'Or ...	27	1,936	27	15	70	174	Ankylostomiasis, Malaria	Tuberculosis, Pneumonia.
Flacq ...	9	2,270	68	13	86	608	Malaria, Influenza, Dysentery ...	Bronchitis, Heart disease.
Mahebourg ...	44	2,803	168	52	106	570	Malaria, Dysentery, Ankylostomiasis, Influenza	Malaria, Dysentery, Pneumonia.
Souillac ...	50	2,442	110	31	103	352	Malaria, Ankylostomiasis ...	Ankylostomiasis
Moka ...	20	1,665	76	17	83	1,615	Ankylostomiasis, Malaria, Intestinal diseases	Intestinal diseases, Typhoid, Anemia.
Victoria ...	190	6,479	407	170	262	2,936	Malaria, Ankylostomiasis, Enteritis, Syphilis, Typhoid, Influenza, Dysentery	Enteritis, Typhoid, Bacillary Dysentery, Tuberculosis, Ankylostomiasis, Pneumonia, Malaria.
Mental ...	6	163	31	2	64	28	Malaria, Dysentery, Epilepsy.	Tuberculosis, Pneumonia, Nephritis.
Grand River North West	—	544	1	7	16	4	Malaria, Influenza, Dysentery, Diseases of digestive system	Malaria.
Barkly Industrial School	—	—	—	—	—	—	Malaria and Influenza ...	—
Detainment Camp...	—	3,547	54	—	200	—	Enteric Fever, Malaria ...	Enteric Fever, Malaria.
Total ...	542	32,404	1,058	487	1,380	10,699	—	—

### Dispensary Returns

37. The dispensaries and the hospital out-patient departments were consulted by male patients 175,242 times and by female patients 167,334 times : total 342,576.

The number of new cases amounted during the year to 235,630. In 1940 255,295 were recorded.

The statistics of the number of new cases seen at hospital out-patient departments and at dispensaries are not accurate owing to the difficulty frequently experienced in deciding whether a case should be registered as a new case or as a reappearance. The most reliable figures are those of attendances.

### General

*Bacteriological Laboratory.*—Good work was performed at this Institution. The number of specimen examined were—

Medical division	...	20,095
Chemical division	...	5,040

*Prisons.*—The general hygiene in the prisons has been maintained at its usual satisfactory standard.

### Conclusion

My thanks are due to individual officers of the Department for their kind and active co-operation and assistance throughout the year.

*A. C. d'ARIFAT, Acting Director,*

*Medical and Health Department.*

#### MAIN CAUSES OF MORBIDITY IN RELATION TO IN-PATIENTS AT HOSPITALS

Diseases	1941	Diseases	1941
Malaria	4,555 ✓	Ascariasis	237 ✓
Ankylostomiasis	1,738 ✓	Cellulitis	214 ✓
Abcesses	1,418 ✓	Syphilis	187 ✓
Injuries	1,074 ✓	Pneumonia	162 ✓
Influenza	665 ✓	Intestinal diseases	161 ✓
Skin diseases	494 ✓	Rheumatism	147 ✓
Dysentery	488 ✓	Typhoid fever	141 ✓
Bronchitis	385 ✓	Diarrhoea	80 ✓
Tuberculosis	327 ✓	Appendicitis	71 ✓
Anæmia	300 ✓	Eye disease	57 ✓
Enteritis	283 ✓	Gonorrhœa	27 ✓
Dyspepsia	252		

#### MAIN CAUSES OF MORBIDITY IN RELATION TO OUT-PATIENTS AT DISPENSARIES (1ST ATTENDANCES ONLY)

Diseases	1941	Diseases	1941
Malaria	54,346 ✓	Rheumatism	3,648 ✓
Ankylostomiasis	15,045 ✓	Ascariasis	2,702 ✓
Diseases Teeth and Gums	15,169	Dysentery	1,846 ✓
Influenza	20,332 ✓	Bronchitis	1,447 ✓
Scabies	5,497 ✓	Asthma	1,050 ✓
Dyspepsia	5,416 ✓	Injuries	545 ✓
Anæmia	4,380 ✓	Conjunctivitis	435 ✓
Abscesses	4,172 ✓	Intestinal diseases	182 ✓
Ascaris	4,051 ✓	Skin diseases	159 ✓
Diarrhoea and Enteritis	3,679 ✓		

